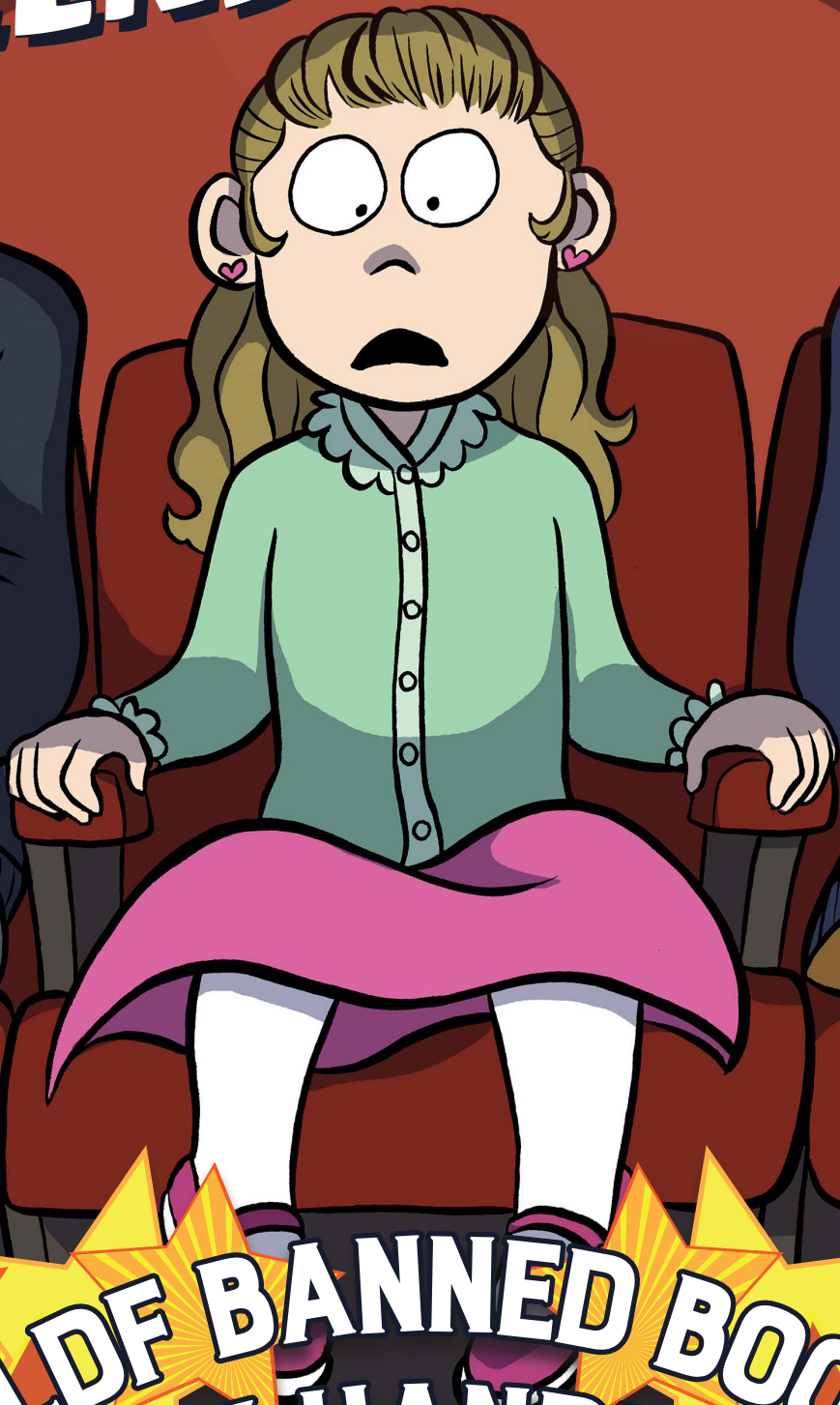


CENSORSHIP!



**CBLDF BANNED BOOKS
WEEK HANDBOOK**

**FIGHT FOR THE
FREEDOM TO READ!**

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Happy Banned Books Week! Every year, communities come together in this national celebration of the freedom to read! This year, Banned Books Week spotlights young adult books, which is by far the category most commonly targeted for censorship. Stand up for the right to read for all readers by becoming a part of the Banned Books Week celebration that will take place September 27 through October 3, 2015!

Launched in 1982 to draw attention to the problem of book censorship in the United States, Banned Books Week is held during the last week of September. By being a part of it, you can make a difference in protecting the freedom to read!

In this handbook, Comic Book Legal Defense Fund provides you with all the tools you need to prepare your Banned Books Week celebration. We'll talk about how books are banned, show you some specific cases in which comics were challenged, and provide you with hands on tips to celebrate Banned Books Week in your community.

It's hard to believe that books are still banned in the United States, and yet each year hundreds of incidents are recorded. CBLDF springs to action in these cases, providing expert support for the librarians and individuals who fight back when calls to censorship arise. We also provide a broad range of preventative resources to help fight censorship, including the Banned Comics section on www.cblddf.org, which features case studies of dozens of graphic novel challenges; dossiers on teaching and defending controversial comics; and Using Graphic Novels in Education, our ongoing column about teaching comics. If you find yourself facing a censorship emergency, contact us right away by calling 1-800-99-CBLDF or emailing us at info@cblddf.org.

Join us this Banned Books Week by using this book as your starting point to speaking up about the freedom to read comics in your community!

—Charles Brownstein, Executive Director

CBLDF THANKS OUR GUARDIAN MEMBERS:

James Wood Bailey, Grant Geissman, Philip Harvey, Joseph H. King, and Midwest Comic Book Association.

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This year, Banned Books Week celebrates young adult books. Believe it or not, these books are challenged more than books for any other age group. In 2014, six of the ten books on the American Library Association's list of Frequently Challenged Books were for young adult audiences. Of those six books, two were graphic novels: *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi and *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier. In the last year, CBLDF has had to defend these books and other comics for teens. Keep reading to learn more about the challenges facing comics for young readers and ways you can celebrate the right to read!



COMICS AND CENSORSHIP

Are books really still banned in the United States?

Yes! Every year, the American Library Association reports hundreds of challenges to books in schools and libraries all over the United States, and ALA estimates that the number of unreported challenges is significantly higher. People continually try to take away readers' power to decide what books are right for themselves or their children by bringing challenges to remove books from libraries. Sometimes, those challenges result in books being removed from circulation — the dreaded ban. Comic books, graphic novels, and manga are frequently challenged and banned.

Why are comics banned?

Comics face challenges for the same reasons as any other books. Reasons books are frequently challenged include “adult content,” “language,” “sex / nudity,” or “inappropriate for age group.” Comics are uniquely vulnerable to challenges because of the medium's visual nature and because comics still carry the stigma of low-value speech. Some challenges are brought against comics because a single page or panel can be taken out of context, while others come under attack because of the mistaken notion that all comics are for children.

Which comics are banned?

Comics are one of the most commonly attacked types of books, with challenges and bans happening every year. In 2014, three comics were among the most challenged books in the United States: *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi, *Saga* by Brian K. Vaughan and Fiona Staples, and *Drama*

by Raina Telgemeier. In the last year, CBLDF has helped combat attempts to ban *Persepolis*, *This One Summer* by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki, and the graphic novel edition of *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman and P. Craig Russell. CBLDF has a full listing of comics that have been banned or challenged at <http://cblddf.org/banned-comic/banned-challenged-comics/>

Why are comics in libraries?

In addition to being a popular form of storytelling that appeals to readers of all ages, comics are a unique and powerful way to encourage literacy. Because of the synergy between art and text, comics are particularly good for reluctant readers, English learners, and people who have learning disorders, such as dyslexia. The skills readers develop from reading comics provide a practical foundation for other kinds of learning. From verbal and visual literacy to critical thinking and memory, comics are a great medium to get communities reading!

What does CBLDF do to help?

CBLDF assists librarians and educators by providing access to resources and writing letters of support in cases where comics and books are challenged. In the past year, CBLDF has opposed several challenges, and we stand ready to address new ones when they occur. CBLDF is also an active sponsor of Banned Books Week and the Kids' Right To Read Project, initiatives that create tools and perform activities that defend the freedom to read.

Visit www.cblddf.org to learn more!

BANNED AND CHALLENGED COMICS

Comics are uniquely vulnerable to challenges because of their visual nature and lasting stigma about the medium's value to readers. Dozens of comics, graphic novels, and manga have been challenged in schools and libraries around the country. Let's take a look at just a few key cases.

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman and P. Craig Russell

- **Location of key challenge:** *Undisclosed*
- **Reason challenged:** *Violence*

Early in 2015, CBLDF was confidentially involved in the defense of the graphic novel edition of Neil Gaiman's acclaimed novel *The Graveyard Book*, which was illustrated by P. Craig Russell. A complaint was filed over violent imagery in the graphic novel, but CBLDF advised that the book was appropriate for the middle school library where it was challenged. The review committee that examined the book affirmed CBLDF's stance and kept the book in the library.



Cover illustration © by P. Craig Russell. Used with permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

Bone by Jeff Smith

- **Location of key challenge:** *Various*
- **Reason challenged:** *Drugs / alcohol / smoking, political viewpoint, racism, violence*

Although considered a modern comics classic that's delighted millions of readers all over the world, *Bone* is also one of the most commonly challenged books in American libraries. In April 2010, a Minnesota parent petitioned for the series' removal from her son's school library over images she believed to be promoting drinking and smoking. The challenge was ultimately rejected by a 10 to 1 vote. In 2011, the entire series was removed from classrooms and libraries in a New Mexico district with no oversight or review process. In early 2014, the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom posted their annual list of the ten most-challenged books. The list had many of the usual suspects and one not-so-usual suspect: *Bone* secured the rank of tenth most challenged book of the year for "political viewpoint, racism, violence." Two of the challenges that put *Bone* on ALA's list took place in Texas, but both school districts reviewed the books and opted to keep the series.

I learned this weekend that *Bone* has been challenged on the basis of "political viewpoint, racism and violence." I have no idea what book these people read. After fielding these and other charges for a while now, I'm starting to think such outrageous accusations (really, racism?) say more about the people who make them than about the books themselves.

— Jeff Smith



© Jeff Smith. Used with permission of Cartoon Books.



Drama by Raina Telgemeier

- **Location of key challenge:** *Mount Pleasant, Texas*
- **Reason challenged:** *LGBTQ themes*

The ban that landed Raina Telgemeier’s middle-grade graphic novel *Drama* on ALA’s frequently challenged books list for 2014 was at Chapel Hill Elementary in Mount Pleasant, Texas. The ban was reported in the Texas ACLU’s “Annual Banned Books Report,” but there has been no news coverage, so details are thin. What is known is that the book was challenged as “sexually explicit,” most likely for a kiss between two male characters.

Drama was removed from the elementary school’s library, but three copies remain in Chapel Hill Independent School District’s combined middle / high school library. The school board policies do not list a formal challenge policy, but there does appear to be some sort of review process because district documentation contains a challenge form, as well as an assessment form for use by a review committee. Further, it is unknown whether the district actually followed its review process, but it seems unlikely that a review committee would objectively agree that the book is “pervasively vulgar,” one of the stated criteria for removal of library materials in district policy.



Art ©2012 by Raina Telgemeier. Used with permission by Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.

This One Summer by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki

- **Location of key challenge:** *Undisclosed*
- **Reason challenged:** *Unsuited to age group*

The announcement of the 2014 Caldecott Medal winner and honorees had many people rushing to pick up the books for their library and classroom collections. Graphic novel *This One Summer* by Jillian Tamaki and Mariko Tamaki broke boundaries by becoming the first graphic novel to earn the Caldecott honor. Unfortunately, the award yielded an unforeseen negative outcome: Since the announcement of the Caldecott honor, CBLDF has been confidentially involved in defending multiple challenges to *This One Summer* in various communities.

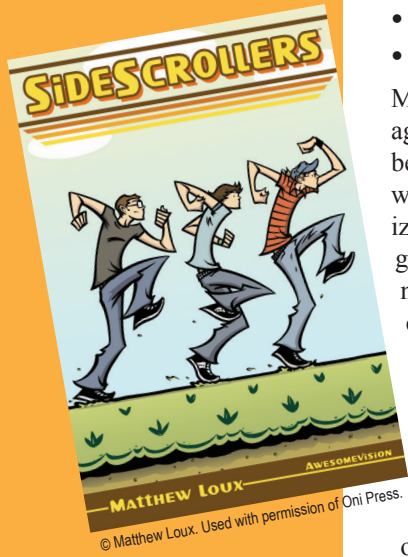
The Caldecott award is given to books intended for children up to age 14. *This One Summer* is intended for ages 12 and up, which makes it eligible for the Caldecott, but books for that age group rarely receive the award. Problems arise when people order a book based on its award pedigree rather than familiarity with the content of the book. A few people, believing the book is aimed at younger readers because it is a Caldecott Honor Book, have been shocked to find that the award winning graphic novel is meant for audiences age 12 and up. Rather than acknowledging their responsibility for knowing the material, some of these individuals instead attacked the book.



From THIS ONE SUMMER ©2014 by Mariko Tamaki. Illustration ©2014 by Jillian Tamaki. Reprinted by permission of First Second Books. All rights reserved.

The Caldecott Medal and Honor are given to illustrators whose work is suitable for children up to 14 years of age. In the last ten years alone, about 82% of Caldecott winners have been for audiences age 8 and younger. As a result, many people have the expectation that Caldecott winners and honorees are meant for the youngest readers.

BANNED AND CHALLENGED COMICS



SideScrollers by Matthew Loux

- **Location of key challenge:** *Enfield, Connecticut*
- **Reason challenged:** *Profanity, sexual content*

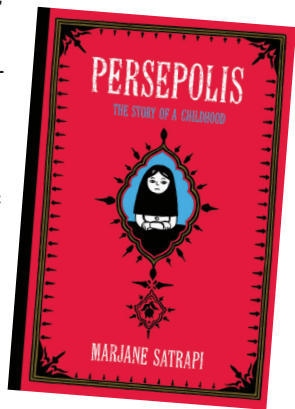
Matthew Loux’s *SideScrollers* recounts the adventures of three teen-aged slacker geeks who are roused to action when a female friend becomes romantically involved with a loutish quarterback. Along the way, the trio engages in mildly vulgar but realistic banter and vandalizes a car with anatomically correct graffiti. The video game-themed graphic novel was removed from a Connecticut school district’s ninth grade summer reading list after a woman in the community complained about profanity and sexual references. The woman, who did not have children in the school system, claimed that her effort to remove the book was “not a question of censorship,” even though the book was not required reading and students could simply chose a different book. It is unclear whether the Board of Education followed its own challenge policy, which states that “no parent nor group of parents has the right to negate the use of educational resources for students other than his/her own child.” Further, the board also changed its policy so that a committee must approve reading lists drawn up by schools.

Persepolis, by Marjane Satrapi

- **Location of key challenge:** *Various*
- **Reason challenged:** *Profanity, violent content, religious viewpoint*

Furor erupted in March 2013 when Chicago Public Schools administrators sent an email to local principals, directing them to remove all copies of Marjane Satrapi’s award-winning autobiographical graphic novel *Persepolis* over “graphic illustrations and language.” Students immediately mobilized to protest the removal, and CPS backedpedaled, clarifying that *Persepolis* was to be retained in district libraries. It was approved for use in grade 11 classrooms, removed from grade 7 classrooms, and reviewed for use in grade 8–10 classrooms. In early 2015, graduate student Jarrett Dapier obtained and released official CPS emails that revealed that administrators in the system ignored school policy in attempting to remove the book.

In 2014, the book was challenged in Oregon’s Three Rivers School District for violent imagery. It was also challenged in Illinois’ Ball-Chatham school district and the Smithville, Texas, school district over the depiction of Muslim faith. All three challenges failed, but they helped earn *Persepolis* the number two spot on ALA’s frequently challenged list.



It’s shameful. I cannot believe something like this can happen in the United States of America... These are not photos of torture. It’s a drawing and it’s one frame. I don’t think American kids of seventh grade have not seen any signs of violence. Seventh graders have brains and they see all kinds of things on cinema and the Internet. It’s a black and white drawing and I’m not showing something extremely horrible.

— Marjane Satrapi



Excerpted from *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi. Copyright ©2003 by Marjane Satrapi. Excerpted by permission of Pantheon, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

The Color of Earth, by Kim Dong Hwa

- **Location of key challenge:** *Various*
- **Reason challenged:** *Nudity, sexual content, unsuited to age group*

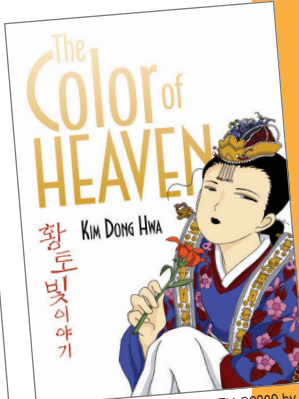
When the American Library Association’s Office for Intellectual Freedom released their list of the Top Ten Most Frequently Challenged Books of 2011, the second-most challenged book on that list was *The Color of Earth*, a critically-acclaimed Korean manwha, or comic book, series. In spite of numerous positive reviews from *Booklist*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The School Library Journal*, and other outlets that praise the book as “richly literate and imaginative” (*Booklist*) and “a work of great humanity” (*Publishers Weekly*), the coming-of-age tale is challenged due to nudity, sexual content, and suitability for age group.



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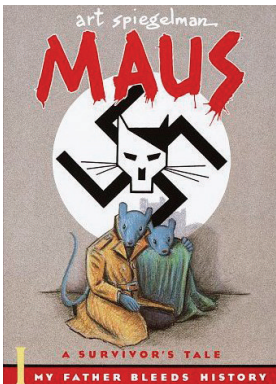
Maus by Art Spiegelman

- **Location of key challenge:** *Pasadena, California*
- **Reason challenged:** *Anti-ethnic, unsuited for age group*

Art Spiegelman’s acclaimed graphic novel *Maus* focuses on a son’s quest to learn about his father, a Polish Jew who survived the Holocaust. Spiegelman famously depicts each ethnic group as a different animal: Jews are drawn as mice, Germans as cats, Poles as pigs — a narrative technique that purposely cannot sustain itself when there is a question about a character’s specific race. Despite its accolades and critical praise, *Maus* has been challenged for being “anti-ethnic” and “unsuitable for younger readers.”

In one instance, the book was challenged at the public library in Pasadena, California, by a man of Polish descent who was offended by the portrayal of his nationality. The challenge failed, and librarian Nick Smith said, “The thing is, *Maus* made him uncomfortable, so he didn’t want other people to read it. That is censorship, as opposed to parental guidance.”

In a strange turn of events, the book was recently pulled from bookstores in Russia because a swastika appears on the cover — a poorly worded law forbids the display of anything that could be considered Nazi propaganda in the country.



© art spiegelman. Used with permission of Pantheon, a division of Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Who challenged books in 2014? According to ALA, parents filed 35% of challenges and library patrons filed 23% of challenges.

Source: <http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2015/issues-and-trends>

These are just a few of the many comics that have been attacked by censors. For a comprehensive list of banned and challenged comics, visit www.cbldef.org.

BANNED BOOKS MYTHS

In 2014, ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom recorded 311 challenges to books around the country. Of these, 38% happened in public libraries, 36% in classrooms, and 11% in school libraries.

Source: <http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2015/issues-and-trends>

“Books aren't banned in this country anymore!”

People ask for books to be removed from libraries and classrooms all the time, and local officials often give in because they want to avoid controversy, or because they personally don't like or “approve of” the book.

We should all be able to decide for ourselves what to read, not have our choices limited by what someone else thinks. If someone doesn't want to read a book, they don't have to, but they shouldn't be able to keep someone else from reading it.

“If my community bans a book, it only impacts my district or school; it doesn't affect anybody else.”

Censorship is about more than a single book. It is about the intellectual, cultural and political life of the community and the people in it.

Each time a book is removed, it reinforces the idea that books and ideas are off-limits if someone doesn't like them. It contributes to a culture where it's better to hide from controversial or difficult topics, than to acknowledge or discuss them.

Restricting or banning a book hurts kids and education, because teachers and librarians may decide not to teach or buy another similar book, even if they feel it would be educational or enjoyable.

Schools, libraries and museums must rely on the professional judgment of individuals with training and expertise, not on the squeaky wheel, or majority opinion.



“Banned Books Myths” reproduced by permission of the National Coalition Against Censorship / Kids Right To Read Project.

<http://ncac.org/project/the-kids-right-to-read-project/>

@KidsRight2Read

“Monkey see, monkey do! If kids read about it, they’ll think it’s acceptable behavior in real life.”

Kids are often much smarter and savvier than adults give them credit for. Just because they know about something or read about it, doesn’t mean they will run out and do it. Kids intuitively understand that novels, like life, are not always what they first may seem. Sometimes the bad guys aren’t really bad, and sometimes the good guys aren’t really good.

We may wish that good would always triumph, love win out, virtue be rewarded. But life doesn’t always work out so neatly. Books help young people understand and appreciate difficult life lessons — before they have to confront them.

“If you can buy a book, it isn’t really censored.”

A book doesn’t have to be censored everywhere, to be censored somewhere. It’s censorship whenever anyone in the government — including public schools and libraries — restricts access to a book because they dislike it or disagree with what it says.

It’s also no answer to say “just buy it.” Maybe you don’t have the money, or can’t get to a store that sells the book, or can’t buy it online because you don’t have a credit card. Not everyone can afford to buy every book they may want to read. That’s what libraries are for.

But even if you could afford to buy the book, government officials still aren’t supposed to tell us what books are “good” or “good for you.”

“They’re just kids, they don’t have rights.”

Even minors have rights under US law, including First Amendment rights, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes a fundamental right to education, which is essential to human dignity and to citizen participation in society.

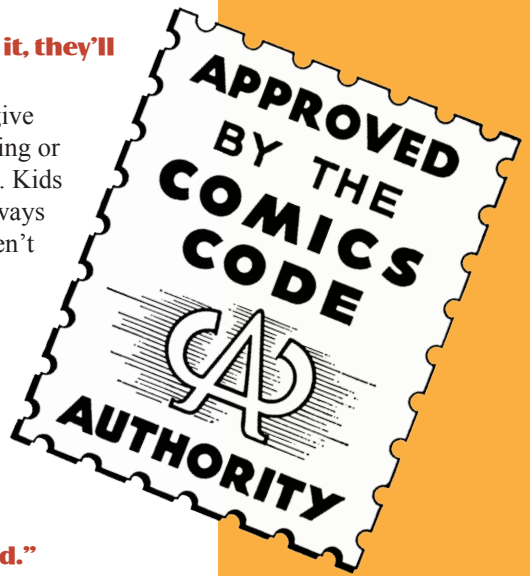
Giving young people an education that prepares them for the challenging world beyond school serves everyone’s interests.

Soon they will be old enough to vote, get jobs, join the military, and start families. Kids need to explore and try to understand the world before they experience it firsthand. Reading widely is the safest way for them to do it.

“As a parent, I have the final say about what my kid reads.”

Parents who object to a book are often able to obtain an alternative. Most school districts are willing to accommodate parental concerns in a way that doesn’t affect students who parents do not share those concerns.

It’s not easy to be a parent. It’s impossible to anticipate or control what children hear about from their friends, much less what they see on television and online. Books can help — especially books that raise difficult issues. Talking about a book offers opportunities to learn about what kids think and what worries them.



If parents are making the decisions that their children can or cannot read this sort of book in the home, that’s fair enough. The parents can take the consequences of that. It won’t necessarily stop the children reading it, but at least it’s a transaction between the child and the parent and it’s the parent taking responsibility for their children, which is fair enough. They shouldn’t hand over that responsibility to an outside body, and along with it, hand over the responsibility of all those other parents who have been finding it quite easy to take an actual personal interest in what their children are reading and to monitor their reading habits themselves.

— Alan Moore

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO READ

I wouldn't be who I am without libraries. I was the sort of kid who devoured books, and my happiest times as a boy were when I persuaded my parents to drop me off in the local library on their way to work, and I spent the day there. I discovered that librarians actually want to help you: they taught me about interlibrary loans.

— Neil Gaiman

The First Amendment doesn't just guarantee free speech — it also assures your right to access the ideas that are found in books. On any given day, someone somewhere could be infringing on your First Amendment rights by bringing a challenge to a book in your local library or school. People have every right to express their opinion about a book, but they don't have the right to limit access to books. This kind of censorship is most effective when people don't act to stop it.

So, what can you do about censorship? It turns out there's a lot you can do to fight for the right to read!

Know what's happening in your community.

Keep in touch with your local librarians and educators to find out about book challenges in your community.

To stay current on censorship issues around the country, subscribe to news publications dedicated to the First Amendment and free expression. CBLDF reports on censorship issues around the world and provides exclusive educational resources related to comics. You can follow our reporting and sign up for our convenient and informative weekly newsletter at www.cbldf.org. The First Amendment Center (www.firstamendmentcenter.org) and the National Coalition Against Censorship (ncac.org) provide breaking First Amendment news and opinion. The former maintains an online database of research articles related to censorship and the First Amendment. The American Library Association publishes the "Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom" and maintains a news blog at www.ala.org/oif.

Report censorship.

An essential step in protecting access to comics is to report challenges when they occur. By reporting challenges, you help free expression advocates gather necessary information about what materials are at risk. Even if a challenged book isn't a comic, tell CBLDF about attempts to censor books in your community. You can reach us at info@cbldf.org or call 1-800-99-CBLDF.

To protect the right to read, CBLDF takes an active stand against all instances of censorship, and the Fund often coordinates efforts with organizations like the Kids' Right to Read Project and ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom. You should also report challenges to KRRP (<http://ncac.org/project/the-kids-right-to-read-project/>) and ALA (<http://www.ala.org/bbooks/challengedmaterials/reporting>).

Support your local librarians and teachers.

Censorship manifests in many ways, and the unique visual nature of comics makes them more prone to censorship than other types of books. Most challenges to comics in libraries and schools come from well-meaning individuals, frequently parents, who find something they believe is objectionable in comics. These challenges are often difficult and stressful for the library and school staff who must manage them. Even if you don't work at the library or school, you can help.

Call
1-800-99-CBLDF
or email
info@cbldf.org
at the first sign of
a First Amendment
emergency!

If you learn of a challenge, let your local librarian or teacher know you can assist. Write letters to your library or school board, attend open meetings to voice your support for the right to read, and help organize peaceful demonstrations in support of challenged materials. If your library or school doesn't have a policy regarding book challenges, work with your library or administration to establish a process for handling challenges. Once a policy is established, make sure it is followed any time there is a challenge.

Sometimes, comics are challenged because library patrons and occasionally even librarians don't understand them. If you have some expertise with comics, volunteer at your local library or school to help staff cultivate and properly shelve a graphic novel collection. To help dispel misconceptions about comics, offer to organize public discussions, read-outs, creator visits, and other events that focus on comics and their value as literature.

Speak up.

Attempts to ban books rarely succeed when people speak out against them. Whether it's a school board, PTA, or library meeting or a public hearing, be there to speak up for the First Amendment and the right to read. Write letters to your local administrators, politicians, and newspapers supporting the right to read. Remind your fellow citizens and officials that no one has the right to restrict access to books, and be prepared to stand up for all books, even those you may not like. Any successful book ban opens the door to more censorship.

Join groups committed to fighting censorship.

Comic Book Legal Defense Fund is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of the First Amendment rights of the comics art form and its community of retailers, creators, publishers, librarians, and readers. CBLDF provides legal referrals, representation, advice, assistance, and education in furtherance of these goals. We're able to do our important work on behalf of the right to read because of the support of our members. You can become a member of CBLDF by completing the membership form in this handbook or by visiting <http://cbldf.myshopify.com/collections/memberships>

CBLDF isn't the only group that advocates for the right to read. The following organizations also help defend books against censorship:

- The American Booksellers for Free Expression (www.bookweb.org/abfe)
- The American Civil Liberties Union (www.aclu.org)
- The Freedom to Read Foundation (www.ft rf.org)
- The National Coalition Against Censorship (ncac.org)

In their annual report on challenges during the 2013-14 school year, the Texas ACLU reports that nearly 30% of challenges in the state resulted in a banned book. Raina Telgemeier's *Drama* was among those banned books.

Source: <http://www.aclutx.org/2014/09/23/18th-annual-banned-books-report/>



PROGRAMMING IDEAS FOR BANNED

Community engagement is one of the best tools for fighting censorship! Celebrate comics, promote understanding, and raise the spirits of your community by developing some of these programming ideas!

Make A Banned Books Week Display

Start the conversation about Banned Books Week by making a display in your library, classroom, or store! Here are just a few ideas to get you started:

- Use CBLDF's Banned Books Week kit, and wrap a selection of banned and challenged titles with caution tape.
- Hang banned books and graphic novels from a mobile, just out of reach of your audience.
- Wrap banned or challenged books in brown paper, and write only the reason why the book was challenged — not the title or creator — across the front of the package. Imagine the customer's surprise when the book labeled "Political Viewpoint, Racism, and Violence" turns out to be *Bone*, by Jeff Smith!
- Design a bulletin board to look like a page from a comic book. In each panel, feature a challenged or banned graphic novel with a word balloon explaining the charge against the material. The more ridiculous the claim, the better!

Banned Books Cosplay

Engage the creativity of your community with a Banned Books Week cosplay event! Encourage patrons to dress up as their favorite character from a banned comic or book, and ask them to talk about why that character matters to them. This is a great event to hold in your library, classroom, or store and to document on your website, blog, and social media pages.

Banned Books Film Fest

Many of the greatest banned books have been adapted into movies, so seize the opportunity to raise awareness by hosting a Banned Books Film Festival! From *To Kill A Mockingbird* to *Persepolis*, a wide range of challenged stories have made the jump from page to screen, and the movies can spark a great conversation with your community!

Banned Books Read Out

Hold a readers' theater in your library's lobby, and have performers read aloud from banned and challenged books and graphic novels. Or organize a 12- or 24-hour read-a-thon, during which patrons, students, and even creators take turns reading banned books.

Join the Virtual Read-Out

Each year, the organizers of Banned Books Week celebrate with a virtual read-out in which anyone can submit a video of themselves reading from a banned book and discussing what it means to them. To learn more, visit bannedbooksweek.org.

People rarely think to include graphic novels when planning a Banned Books Read Out, but they make for fantastically dramatic group reads, with a different reader for each character. Or even with a single reader changing his / her voice as the characters shift. These readings always draw a crowd.

— Eva Volin, Alameda Free Public Library

BOOKS WEEK AND BEYOND!

Banned Books Debate

For a lively and illuminating conversation about intellectual freedom, bring together members of your community or students in your classroom to debate the pros and cons of book censorship!

Art Exhibit

Passive programs are good, too! Is there a professional comics artist in your area? A high school manga / anime art club? Participants at a comics drawing workshop? Offer to display their artwork!

Comic Book Swap

Looking for an intergenerational program? Try a comics swap. Reach out to local comics shops for donations of older titles, Free Comic Book Day leftovers, or anything else for which you think your patrons or students would be willing to trade. Or work with your Friends of the Library or a local used bookstore to find graphic novels or comics-adjacent materials. Then invite people to bring books of their own to swap!

Comic Workshops

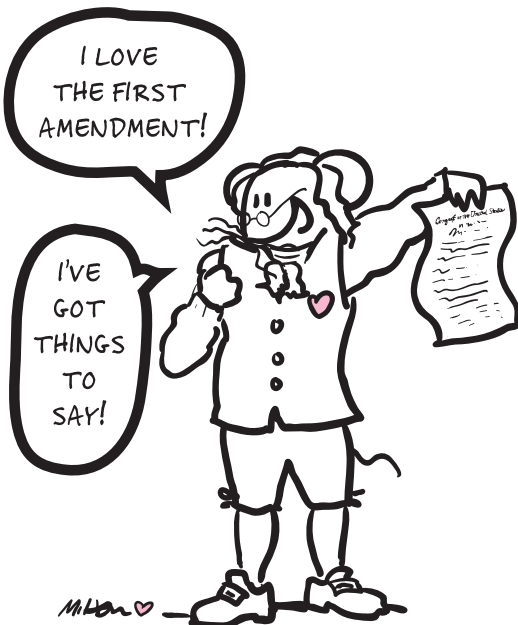
Kids, teens, and adults all love to draw. Invite a local comics creator, book illustrator, or even a high school art teacher to spend an hour working with your patrons and students on their drawing and storytelling skills. Invite a local comics writer or editor to talk about how writing for visual stories is different than writing prose. At the end, encourage participants to photocopy the results to make their own mini-comic or to post online as a webcomic!

Creator Visit

Many writers and illustrators are willing to visit schools, libraries, and stores, so don't be afraid to ask them to be part of your Banned Books Week events. Check creator websites to see if they have preferred ways of handling such requests. Plan ahead, especially if travel is involved. Six to eight months ahead of the desired date is not too early!

Why invite just one author or artist when you can invite a bunch? A fun alternative to the usual cre-

Looking for a comics creator to visit your library or classroom? The CBLDF Comics Connector connects librarians and educators with creators! <http://cblddf.org/resources/comics-connector/>



**DEFEND FREE SPEECH
LIKE BABYMOUSE!**

PROGRAMMING, CONT.

ator visit is the talent panel, where creators have a chance to interact, tell stories, and discuss alongside their peers questions posed by a moderator or the audience.

For creators who can't travel, give Skype or Google+ Hangouts a try! Many authors and illustrators are happy to "meet" your group via the Internet.

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) has a list of tips for planning a successful author or artist visit. Check it out: <http://www.ala.org/alsc/awardsgrants/profawards/hayesaward/tipsforvisitplanning>

The **CBLDF Comics Connector** (<http://cblfd.org/resources/comics-connector/>) is a resource that lists comics creators and industry professionals who are able to provide lectures and workshops for schools and libraries.

Mini Comics Convention

This is the perfect opportunity to put all your programming ideas together into one big event! Scale down what is usually found at a comics convention until it's the perfect size for your library, classroom, or store. Artist alley, cosplay, demos and workshops, speaker panels, and even an art auction are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to programs that happen at a convention.

To keep things fresh, change your theme from year to year, from superheroes to steampunk to manga / anime to science fiction. Aim for an all-ages event when possible. It's not only teens who read and love comics!

Book Clubs

There's no need to limit your book club selections to only prose. Many — if not most — graphic novels are as appealing and discussable as traditional book club selections. Venture beyond the literary comics and include superhero, action / adventure, manga, or fantasy comics to spice up your list.

Adding graphic novels to an existing book club's reading list gives members an opportunity to look at books and reading in different ways. Why did the author feel images were necessary to tell this particular story? How did viewing pictures as well as words change the reader's experience with the book?

Be patient with those members who are not familiar with the graphic novel format. It takes practice to be a good comics reader! For tips on running a comic book club, pick up *The Comic Book Club Handbook* (<http://tinyurl.com/qflzb6t>)!

Host a Fundraiser

Choose a worthy free speech advocate — like CBLDF! — and host a fundraiser at your library, school, or store! Whether a party, creator event, or charity auction, CBLDF is happy to provide materials and support for your event! Send us an email at info@cblfd.org when you're planning your event.

One of the best things that has come out of our book clubs has been the community of comic readers that was, and is still being, built. Crossing generational lines and representing the diversity of our city, the comic book clubs have become a safe forum for readers of different backgrounds and experiences to get together to talk about comics.

— Erwin Magbanua, San Diego Public Library

In the CBLDF Rewards Zone:

- Declare that you read banned comics with “I Read Banned Comics” merchandise, including men’s and women’s t-shirts (\$25 donation, <http://tinyurl.com/qzwcsgq>) and the Banned Books Week gear bundle, which includes stickers, prints, and extra copies of the *CBLDF Banned Books Week Handbook* (\$25 donation, <http://tinyurl.com/psz5zgg>)!
- Introduce parents to how comics can help kids love to read with *Raising a Reader! How Comics & Graphic Novels Can Help Your Kids Love To Read!* (starts at a \$5 donation for a bundle of ten, <http://tinyurl.com/o9zrtsn>).
- Start a comic book club in your community with *The Comic Book Club Handbook* (\$3 donation or \$10 donation for a bundle of five, <http://tinyurl.com/qfzb6t>).



FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO READ — JOIN CBLDF TODAY!

CBLDF’s important work defending the freedom to read is only possible because of the support of individuals like you. Show your support for our work protecting the freedom to read by making a tax-deductible membership contribution today! We have membership plans for donors in every budget!

Membership Level

- Member • \$100** (CBLDF membership card, button set, sticker set, embroidered patch, and exclusive t-shirt featuring art by Michael Cho)
- Associate Member • \$30** (CBLDF membership card and CBLDF bumper sticker)
- Supporter Member • \$50** (CBLDF membership card, button set, sticker set, and embroidered patch)
- Defender Member • \$250** (All of the above, plus a subscription to CBLDF Defender, coffee mug, and canvas tote bag)
- I’m already a member**, but I’d like to make an additional donation of \$_____
- \$500 Protector** (All of the above, plus exclusive embossed executive Moleskine journal and CBLDF gym bag)
- \$1,000 Champion** (All of the above, plus recognition in CBLDF Liberty Annual and a CBLDF publication assortment that includes variant covers and assorted printed material)
- \$2,500 Guardian** (All of the above, plus special recognition in CBLDF publications throughout 2015)

Members joining at the \$100 level and higher will receive a 2015 CBLDF shirt, with art by Michael Cho!
T-shirt size (circle one): S M L XL XXL

- Please send no premiums.

CBLDF Defender Quarterly Newsletter Subscription

- \$10 for Nonmembers
- \$5 for Members

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Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

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Payment Information

- Online** (Visit us at <http://cblfd.myshopify.com/collections/memberships>)
- By check** (Please make checks payable to CBLDF.)
- By credit card** (Please complete the following.)

Card Number _____

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Signature _____

Thank you for your support!

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**SUPPORT BANNED
BOOKS WEEK!**

CBLDF creates merchandise to support our efforts protecting the freedom to read! Get Banned Books Week merchandise, such as t-shirts, display kits, buttons, and more at www.cbldf.org.

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255 West 36th Street, Suite 501
New York, New York 10018

www.cbldf.org
info@cbldf.org

1-800-99-CBLDF



This Handbook compliments of:

